

NOTES ON SOME SIPHONAPTERA FROM  
ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK

BY EDWARD D. CUMMINGS

U. S. CHEMICAL CORPS, ARMY CHEMICAL CENTER, MARYLAND<sup>1</sup>

This is the second in a projected series of papers on the Siphonaptera of eastern New York. Sturm (1953) has reported on a small collection of fleas from Fulton County. The present paper deals with a collection of 241 fleas collected in Albany County during 1952 and 1953.

I am grateful to Dr. Allen H. Benton, N.Y.S. College for Teachers, Albany, for advice and assistance throughout the progress of this study; to Arnold Dansky, who collected most of the mammals from which the parasites were taken; and to John Wilcox, N. Y. State Museum, Albany, for assistance in the identification of certain critical specimens.

Nomenclature follows Jellison et. al. (1953), with the exception of *Peromyscopsylla scotti* Fox, which Dr. Jellison informs me was inadvertently omitted from the list.

Family Pulicidae

*Cediopsylla simplex* (Baker)—Slingerlands, February, 1953: nine males, 16 females, from cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus*. Albany, no date: one male, from house cat, *Felis domestica*.

*Ctenocephalides f. felis* (Bouché)—Colonic, no date: 11 males, 17 females, from *Felis domestica*.

Family Hystrichopsyllidae

*Hystrichopsylla tabavuana* Jordan—Albany, October 28, 1952: one female from short-tailed shrew, *Blarina brevicauda*.

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<sup>1</sup>Formerly at New York State College for Teachers, Albany, New York.

*Stenoponia americana* (Baker)—Albany, Sept. 25, 1952: one male from *Blarina brevicauda*; Sept. 26, 1952: one female from the deer-mouse, *Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis*; March 12, 1953: one female, same host. These are the only New York records of this flea. *Epitedia wenmanni* (Rothschild)—Albany, Sept. 27, 1952: one female from *Blarina brevicauda*; Oct. 29, 1952: one male from *Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis*.

*Ctenophthalmus p. pseudagyrtus* Baker—This common flea occurred on practically every species of small mammal taken. Forty-five specimens were taken as follows: Albany, March, 1953: nine males and 12 females from nests of meadow mouse, *Microtus p. pennsylvanicus*; Sept. 24, 1952: one male from *Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis*; No date: two females, one male, same host; Oct. 14, 1952: one male, one female, from *Blarina brevicauda*; Oct. 15, 1952: one female, same host; Oct. 25, 1952: one male, same host; Oct. 28, 1952: two males, same host; Oct. 30, 1952: two males, four females, same host; Slingerlands, Oct. 31, 1952: four males, three females from *Parascalops breweri*; Nov. 20, 1952, one female from star-nosed mole, *Condylura cristata*.

*Doratopsylla blarinae* Fox—Albany, Oct. 28, 1952: five males, six females, from *Blarina brevicauda*; Oct. 29, 1952: eight males, three females, same host; Oct. 30, 1952: seven males, two females, same host; Slingerlands, Nov. 12, 1952: two males, one female, from *Parascalops breweri*.

*Nearctopsylla genalis laurentina* Jordan and Rothschild—Albany, Oct. 28, 1952: one male, two females, from *Blarina brevicauda*; Oct. 29, 1952: two males, same host; Oct. 30, 1952: two males, two females, same host.

Holland (1949) has summarized the taxonomic problem in this species. Our specimens agree perfectly with the description and illustrations of *N. g. laurentina*. The shape of sternum IX of the male is very constant in our specimens. Sternum VII of the females is more variable, but approaches that illustrated by Holland.

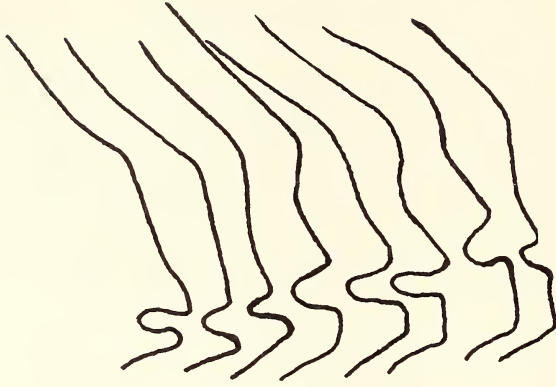
## Family Ceratophyllidae

*Orchopeas leucopus* (Baker)—Albany, Sept. 25, 1952: two females, from *Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis*; Sept. 26, 1952: three females, same host; Oct. 29, 1952: nine males, 14 females, same host; March 12, 1953: six females, same host; March 18, 1953: one male, nine females, same host; March 19, 1953: three males, two females, from nest which was supposed to be that of *Microtus p. pennsylvanicus*, but which may have been occupied by deer mice.

*Orchopeas h. howardii* (Baker)—Albany, Oct. 15, 1952: four males, ten females, from gray squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis leucotis*; February, 1953: four males, five females, same host.

Females of the genus *Orchopeas* are often exceedingly difficult to identify, for the distinguishing characters are highly variable. Often the host animal is the best clue to identification, since these fleas are rather host-specific; but even this guide is not always helpful, since fleas occasionally find their way onto accidental hosts. Most keys, e. g. Fox (1940) and Holland (1949) utilize the presence or absence of the frontal row of bristles to separate the mouse fleas from the squirrel-infesting species, *O. caedens* and *O. howardii*. Hubbard (1947) gave no key to the females of this genus, but showed, (Fig. 36, p. 102), a complete frontal row of bristles on *O. c. durus*. None of our specimens of *O. c. durus* shows this characteristic, but one female, which otherwise agrees with *O. howardii*, has a complete frontal row of bristles. While this is certainly not the normal state of affairs, it apparently may occur in both these species.

Holland (1949) further stated that the sinus in sternum VII of *O. howardii* "appears to be very constant, there being a small but distinct sinus, situated low down." In our collection, this character is highly variable. Figure 1 shows the range of variation in this character among females taken from a single gray squirrel at Albany. It appears that this character is nearly as variable in this species as in other species of the genus.



**FIGURE 1—VARIATION IN STERNUM VII  
OF ORCHOPEAS HOWARDII**

*Megabothris a. asio* (Baker)—Albany, Oct. 15, 1952: one female, from *Microtus p. pennsylvanicus*; Oct. 16, 1952: one male, same host; March 19, 1953: one male, two females, same host; March 19, 1953: four males, eight females, from nest of same host.

This species, while difficult to secure by normal trapping methods, can be taken readily from nests of its host. Nests collected and placed in glass jars in a warm room will produce adult fleas over a period of several weeks in most cases.

*Peromyscopsylla scotti* I. Fox—This flea has been taken only a few times in the northeast, *P. b. hesperomys* being far more common in most collections. Specimens taken were: Albany, Sept. 26, 1952: one male, three females, from *Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis*.

#### LITERATURE CITED

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## THE FANEUIL HALL GRASSHOPPER AND SHEM DROWN

Apropos of the note on entomological signboards in the December 1948 issue of this Journal, the late Dr. William Procter while passing through Boston about 25 years ago, noticed the old grasshopper weather-vane on Faneuil Hall. Upon making inquiry the librarian of the State House supplied the following information, which Dr. Procter passed on to Harry B. Weiss.

Shem Drown was born at Kittery, Maine in 1683. His father, Leonard Drown, born 1646, came to Kittery from the west of England, the first of the family to come over to those shores. On account of the French and Indian wars he moved with his family to Boston in 1692, where he died October 31, 1729, and was buried at Copp's Hill.

Shem Drown was made a deacon of the First Baptist Church in 1721. He died January 13, 1774, aged ninety-one years.

In 1721 he made a cockerel for the vane of the "new brick church" on Hanover Street, which was built the year before. In 1873 this